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NPIC/TSSG/RED-090-70
17 March 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Technical Services & Support Group, NPIC
THROUGH : Chief, Research & Engineering Division, TSSG
SUBJECT : Rental of an IBM Mag Card Selectric Typewriter

1. One of the most pressing problems facing RED in terms of expediting the approval actions on Research & Development programs is the backlog in paper work--mainly in typing. This tie-up results from a number of factors but the two major ones are:

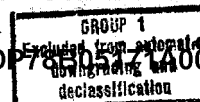
a. Project approval requests go to the highest levels of management, Center, DDI, and Agency; therefore, they must be unusually well written, completely coherent, and letter perfect in grammar, punctuation, spelling, format, and typing, in other words, error free.

b. Often they have to be written under imposing time restraints due to management pressure or contractual restraints. Consequently, the problem of typing multiple page documents quickly, with numerous carbons, without errors is an imposing one, particularly with some of our less experienced typists.

2. The typing of these finished approval documents is a major problem. However, this problem has a solution. The IBM Magnetic Card Selectric (MCS) is a recent equipment innovation which would go a long way towards alleviating these particular problems. In the MCS system, as the typist types the document, the written material--along with all the relevant carriage motions--is recorded on a magnetically coated card in digital form. This digital record can then be utilized to retype the entire document while, at the same time, providing two distinct advantages to RED which are (1) multiple copies can be retyped without typing errors, assuming that the original is correct, and (2) corrections can be made to the total document by simply typing in the correction and letting the machine retype the document--not the secretary. This is of major interest to RED. The time savings and overall improvement in both correctness and appearance of the final documents leaving RED should be self-evident.

3. We have a secondary strong interest in this equipment, which relates to our inputs to the Agency's Contract Information System (CIS). We recently revised RED's reporting forms so that the R&D Project Status Reports and the CIS Status Sheets are combined into one single form. OCS has already agreed

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to accept NPIC's CIS data in this new format. This new form was designed with the Magnetic Card Selectric System in mind. It will now be possible to type the necessary information on the new forms, utilizing the MCS. We will then retain the magnetic card and only input changes as they occur, letting the machine perform the total updating operation, which currently results in a great deal of lost manhours on the part of our secretaries. Furthermore, this system could be the first step towards the ultimate computerization of the entire process at some future date.

4. In addition, we have a number of situations where we have to periodically reorder materials, e.g., chemical supplies for the Lab., etc. The Form 88, required to implement this procurement, is always the same except, of course, for the date. The typed information could be stored on cards and a proper form automatically typed whenever a reorder is required--usually monthly.

5. RED Staff members have observed the operations of this equipment and feel that the machine would soon pay for itself in reduced manhours and in improved efficiency and timeliness. We would like to purchase this equipment; however, we suggest that we first rent the equipment for a couple of months in order to establish and demonstrate the increase in efficiency, thereby, improving the usefulness of this approach. Request for purchase, if justified, would be forthcoming in FY-71. The equipment currently rents for [] per month; a six-month trial period would cost [] RED has no funds set aside for rentals, so funds would have to be transferred to such an account. Considering the promised increase in efficiency, this appears to be an essential and highly worthwhile action.

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Deputy Chief,
Research & Engineering Division, TSSG

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